# THE NEW SUNDAY EXPRESS

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## TWO DEAD AS BLASTS TEAR THROUGH KABUL GURDWARA

**At least seven persons were also injured in the latest attack to target the Sikh community in war-torn Afghanistan**

### EXPLOSIVE-LADEN TRUCK STOPPED

A series of explosions was followed by gunfights between terrorists and Taliban fighters, a Taliban spokesperson said without divulging any details about the attackers. Afghanistan's interior ministry said a bigger tragedy was thwarted as security personnel stopped an explosive-laden vehicle from reaching the Gurdwara. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack

### A CENTRE OF AFGHAN HINDUS, SIKHS

- The early-morning attack killed a devotee and a security guard. It happened in an area with a sizable Hindu and Sikh population
- Reacting sharply to the incident, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said, "The cowardly attack on Gurdwara Karte Parwan should be condemned in the strongest terms by all" | P12

30

PEOPLE WERE INSIDE THE GURDWARA AT THE TIME OF ATTACK


CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

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JAB-O-METER TAKE YOUR SHOT

June 17 13,14,094 doses
June 18 11,61,176 doses
TOTALS 186,13,26,102

| NATIONWIDE | June 17 | June 18 | KARNATAKA | June 17 | June 18 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fresh cases | 12,847 | 13,216 | Fresh cases | 634 | 750 |
| Recoveries | 7,985 | 6,146 | Recoveries | 903 | 425 |
| Deaths | 144 | 23 | Deaths | 2 | 1 |

WITH THIS ISSUE
THE GREAT INDIAN JOB RACE
PLUS 12 PAGES MAGAZINE

10% vacancies in CAPFs, Assam Rifles, Coast Guard to be reserved for recruits under scheme

# Govt set to go ahead with Agnipath, lists more sops

CHANDAN NANDY & MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

UNDETERRED by the violent protests against the Agnipath scheme, the Centre on Saturday indicated it will go ahead with the recruitment as it announced a slew of new concessions for Agniveer aspirants.

While the Union home ministry announced that 10% vacancies in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Assam Rifles would be reserved for Agniveers, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved a similar proposal for the new recruits once they complete their four-year tenure in the armed forces.

The newly announced reservation will be applicable for the Indian Coast Guard, defence civilian posts and all 16 defence public sector undertakings. The reservation for Agniveers will be in addition to existing quota for ex-servicemen. In a statement, the defence ministry said "necessary age relaxation provision will also be made" to effect this change. The fresh announcements follow the government's one-time relaxation in the upper age limit for joining the armed forces this year, raising it from 21 to 23, in view of the freeze in recruitment drive in the past two years due to the pandemic. According to the Agnipath scheme announced on June 14, those between 17.5 and 21 years of age can apply to be Agniveers for four years.

The Home Ministry also decided to give three years age relaxation beyond the prescribed upper age limit to Agniveers for recruitment to CAPFs and Assam Rifles. For the first batch of Agniveers, the age relaxation will be for five years beyond the prescribed upper age limit. In addition to the two ministries, Karnataka, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Assam have announced preference to Agniveers in police recruitment. "The state police forces will benefit from the training and discipline inculcated to Agniveers by the forces and their capabilities in tackling insurgency, Naxalism and natural disasters will be augmented," said the government in a press release. According to the government, several corporate houses and industry bodies have welcomed the new and transformative recruitment process for the armed forces.

"The well trained, disciplined and technologically savvy youth who finish their service in the armed forces will be a valuable asset to their organisations, they said.

Apart from customised certificates, a bachelor's programme by the Indira Gandhi National Open University has been planned for the Agniveers. The government is hopeful that financial institutions will also extend support. To identify the ways in which banks can support Agniveers on completion of their tenure of duty, Secretary, Department of Financial Services held a meeting with the heads of public-sector banks, public-sector insurance companies and financial institutions. It was decided banks and financial institutions will explore job opportunities for Agniveers in suitable capacities based on their educational qualifications and skills. P7,9

*It is bringing revolutionary changes in the recruitment process in the armed forces. Some people are spreading misunderstanding about it*

**Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister**

### K'taka mulls quota for Agniveers in police dept

Bengaluru: Amid protests against the Centre's Agnipath scheme, Karnataka Home Minister Araga Jnanendra on Saturday said the state government will soon come out with a policy of reservation to the Agniveers in the police department for those who complete four years of service. The issue will be discussed with CM, he said | P4

### Cong to launch protest at Jantar Mantar: Kharge

Bengaluru: Strongly opposing the Centre's Agnipath scheme, Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday said the Congress will launch an agitation at the Jantar Mantar in New Delhi in a day or two. "Nobody will tell the youth to torch trains and we do not approve of violence," he told reporters | P4

## Protests enter Karnataka, Dharwad, Khanapur tense

MALLIKARJUN HIREMATH @ Dharwad

THE ongoing protests against the Union government's military recruitment scheme, Agnipath, has entered Karnataka. On Saturday, in the first protest reported from the State, police resorted to a mild lathi-charge when around 200 youth gathered at Old SP Circle in Dharwad to take out a march. Tension prevailed when some miscreants pelted stones at a private bus. Police however stopped the protesters but they were adamant on taking out a march to the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) office. Hubballi-Dharwad Police Commissioner Labhu Ram said around 200 youth who are said to have recently been selected for the physical test in Army recruitment, were protesting. Others too joined the protest.

"We are checking video footage and will try to prevent any untoward incident from taking place. From Friday itself, policemen have been deployed at sensitive spots", Labhu Ram added. Meanwhile, security has been beefed up at railway stations and bus terminals in the twin cities of Hubballi-Dharwad. According to police sources, as of now, no case has been filed against the protesters.

The protest held in the city has taken many by surprise as selection trials for defence forces are rarely held here. But, of late, the youth in this part of the area have been showing interest to join the forces. P4

## 61.8% clear II PU exam, girls outshine boys

Science topper Simran Sesha Rao who scored 598

Commerce topper Manav Kejriwal who scored 596

**Over 91K secure distinction**

91,106 students have passed with distinction, 2,14,115 with first class marks

SHILPA P @ Bengaluru

GIRLS have outshone boys and students from rural areas have outdone those from urban colleges in the Second PU examinations held between April 22 and May 18 this year with a total 61.88% students passing the examinations, results of which were announced on Saturday. Announcing the results on Saturday, Primary and Secondary Education Minister B C Nagesh said 72.53% in science, 64.97% in commerce and 48.71% students in arts stream have passed the exams.

Dakshina Kannada district has stood first with a passing percentage of 88.02%, Bengaluru South — fourth (76.24%), Bengaluru North — seventh (72.01%) and Chithradurga district has recorded the lowest passing percentage (49.31%).

Nagesh said that as many 6,810 were promoted by giving grace marks of up to five marks for one subject to students who had scored an aggregate of 210 marks with 70 in languages and 140 in optional subjects. CONTINUED ON : P2

## Rain horror in B'luru: One dead, another washed away

Fire and Emergency Service and NDRF personnel launch a joint search operation for 28-year-old Mithun (right), who was washed away at KR Puram in Bengaluru on Friday night | EXPRESS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

AN elderly woman died and a 28-year-old man was washed away in a storm water drain when heavy rains lashed Bengaluru on Friday night. The deceased Muniyamma, 62, was killed after a wall of her house in Cauvery Nagar collapsed due to the impact of the rains and heavy winds. Two other persons suffered minor injuries in the incident.

In another tragic incident, a man, 28, was washed away after he slipped and fell into a storm water drain in K R Puram while trying to retrieve his bike which fell into the drain. Bikes of four bachelors staying in the area fell into the drain when a compound wall of a house adjoining the drain collapsed.

According to Urban Development Minister Byrathi Basavaraj, 50 NDRF personnel are engaged in search operation. "The victim is from Shivamogga and his father has arrived. Rs 5 lakh compensation will be given to the deceased and the homes which are severely impacted will be given Rs 25,000 each," said Basavaraj. P5

EXPRESS READ

### Police raid flat, detain 29 models on drug charges

Bengaluru: Police raided a flat at a posh apartment in Hennur police station limits on Saturday, and detained 29 models, some of whom are foreigners. They have been subjected to blood tests to ascertain presence of drugs | P5

### Konkanis in Karwar protest, demand road signs in Devanagari

Karwar: Karwar has turned into a hotbed of protests after the Karwar Municipality, which painted the road signboards in both Kannada and Devanagari languages deleted the Devanagari script to retain Kannada letters after agitation from Kannada organisations | P4

## Farooq bows out of Prez poll race

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

NATIONAL Conference chief and former Jammu & Kashmir chief minister **Farooq Abdullah** on Saturday declined the invite to be the Opposition's candidate for President, dealing a blow to West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee's efforts to propose a consensus name.

Thanking Mamata for the offer, Abdullah said he wants to remain in active politics as he has a lot more to contribute. "I withdraw my name from consideration as a possible joint opposition candidate. I believe that Jammu and Kashmir is passing through a critical juncture and my efforts are required to help navigate these uncertain times," he said.

Earlier, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, too, had declined the offer to be the Opposition's consensus candidate for President. Apart from Pawar and Abdullah, Mamata-led Opposition meet on June 15 had also suggested former West Bengal governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi as the third choice.

According to sources, both Pawar and Abdullah rejected the invite due to the Opposition's weak electoral strength for Presidential polls. "Now, Gopalkrishna Gandhi is the only name in the race but he is yet say yes or no," said a Congress leader.

The next meeting of Opposition parties may take place on June 20 or 21 in Mumbai or Delhi. "The final decision may come at this meeting. But, Abdullah's refusal to be the joint consensus candidate for the Presidential has given a jolt to Didi's effort being made to put a united face against the BJP-led NDA face of President," said an opposition leader.

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## Jumbo trafficking racket: Odisha blows lid

SIBA MOHANTY @ Bhubaneswar

IN what could be of huge ramification, the Forest department of Odisha has blown the lid off a pan-India illegal elephant trafficking racket which attempted to use forged no objection certificates (NOCs) to smuggle captive jumbos through the State to Gujarat. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) and Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW) has alerted its counterparts in other states and the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) so that applications for transportation of elephants and their movement across the country can be closely monitored. The matter assumes significance in view of a proposed amendment by Centre to the Wildlife Protection Act which seeks to commercialise the Schedule –I species.

There already exists a huge nexus between capture of wild elephants and their demand by temples, religious institutions and even political parties.

At least, eight cases of trafficking have come to fore last month. The CWLW of Odisha found racketeers tried to fake NOCs by using forged signatures. In all cases, the attempt was to allegedly smuggle elephants from Assam. P7

EXPRESS INTAKE


Former education minister M Raghupathy passes away | P4

'No scope for misconduct henceforth, especially in B'luru' | P7

Trans may avail gender change surgery under Ayushman soon | P9

Digital payments: Moving towards tokenisation regime | P13